Psychology 280, General Seminar
Fall 2014

Instructor
Dr. Greg Feist
Office Hours:
Office: DMH, Rm. 313
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Readings & Resources:

   ISBN: **978-0761924845**
   • new from $30 on Amazon; used from $1.82
     [http://www.amazon.com/Negotiating-Graduate-School-Students-Skills/dp/0761924841](http://www.amazon.com/Negotiating-Graduate-School-Students-Skills/dp/0761924841)
   • HANDBOOK for MA PROGRAM (PDF emailed to you in June)

   • ISBN: 978-1-59147-035-9


4. Class Website: [https://sjsu.instructure.com/](https://sjsu.instructure.com/). go here for all syllabus, course information, lecture outlines, announcements, and handouts

Logging Into Canvas
Canvas Login URL: [https://sjsu.instructure.com/](https://sjsu.instructure.com/). Please note that it should NOT have the "www" at the start of the URL like many other websites. All students and faculty must first set up their SJSUOne account before accessing Canvas. To do so, go to [http://its.sjsu.edu/services/sjsuone/](http://its.sjsu.edu/services/sjsuone/). The Username for Canvas then is your 9 digit SID or Employee ID and your PW is the one you chose when you established your SJSUOne account. You will see the courses you taking (assuming the instructor is using Canvas).

Further Assistance with Canvas
Students should go first to [http://guides.instructure.com/m/4212](http://guides.instructure.com/m/4212) with problems and then to the University Help Desk for Canvas problems, including logging in [http://www.sjsu.edu/helpdesk/](http://www.sjsu.edu/helpdesk/).

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**
A central tenet of this course is that the graduate student must know and “control” all aspects of their graduate education as much as possible. This course provides many useful exercises, tools, and techniques that encourage the graduate students to take more control of the process of obtaining a graduate degree. The course is designed around three learning modules; Succeeding in Graduate School, Developing Your Research Ideas, and Developing Your Communications Skills. Unlike your other graduate courses, the objective of this course is not to develop an expertise in these areas, but rather to introduce the important issues
surrounding graduate student success, allow you to identify your weaknesses, and provide you with techniques for turning them into strengths.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, you should:

1. Have a working knowledge of standard productivity software, e.g., spreadsheets, presentations, etc
2. Be able to write generatively on regular basis
3. Be able to prepare and present an oral presentation using PowerPoint
4. Have developed a written thesis prospectus

MA Program Learning Objectives

1. Knowledge Base: Students completing the MA in Psychology program will understand the major theoretical perspectives and research methods across areas of experimental psychology, i.e., Developmental, Social, Cognitive, and Physiological.

2. Research Skills: Graduates of our program will possess an advanced level of competence in research methods, statistical techniques, and technical writing skills.

3. Career Enhancement: Students completing the MA in Psychology program will achieve career enhancement through placement in a doctoral program or acceptance of a position requiring a master’s in psychology in the public or private sector.

TESTING & GRADING POLICY

Your grade will be determined by your performance in four aspects of the course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Item and Their Value</th>
<th>How Many?</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation (includes IRB online training)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Thesis Prospectus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospectus Presentation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A letter grade will be assigned based on a standard distribution of points. Your final grade will be calculated by summing your assigned points in each of the categories and a letter grade will be assigned based on the following distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100 – 95.0</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>76.9 – 72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92.5 – 94.9</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70.0 – 71.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90.0 – 92.4</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69.9 – 67.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89.9 – 87.0</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>67.4 – 62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86.9 – 82.0</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60.0 – 62.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participation
Participation in class discussions is very important and constitutes a portion of your grade. An assessment of participation will be done informally during the semester. I also would encourage you to seek me out to check on your level of participation. If you are not talking enough or are not evidencing that you have done the readings, you will receive feedback. If you talk so much that others do not have a chance to talk, you will receive feedback. If your points are consistently off topic or use too much of your own personal experience, you will, again, receive feedback. If you do not make an effort to correct any of these issues, points will be deducted from your participation grade.

You should see me at the beginning of the semester if you have any concerns or fears about participating in a seminar class. If you need to miss a class period, please let me know prior to that date by phone or email.

Exercises
You will be required to complete 10 exercises throughout the semester. Each exercise is meant to emphasize course content, provide practical experience, and/or facilitate your progress toward designing original research. Specific instructions for each exercise will be provided during the semester. All exercises will require access to a computer and some will require specific software that is available on University-owned computers (i.e., Microsoft Excel & PowerPoint). If you do not own a computer or own the require software, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the computing resources provided by the University.

Thesis Prospectus
You will have two written assignments (Introduction and Methods) that build directly to the final integrated Thesis Prospectus). Each of these is at least 500 words (1,000 total). You will also be required to formulate and propose original research ideas in the form of a final thesis prospectus in APA format. The final paper must be at least 2,500 words (about 10 pages). These research ideas must be your own. While I encourage you to share your ideas with your fellow students and faculty for their feedback, the original ideas, their written description, and their oral presentation must be yours alone. In other words, plagiarism of any sort will not be tolerated!

WRITING & LATE WORK POLICIES
The quality of your writing is graded in this class. You will lose points if I cannot understand what you are trying to say. If your grammar is too difficult to understand, you should seek additional assistance with your writing.

Whenever referencing something you have read, you are expected to provide a complete, APA-style reference. It is assumed that you know, understand, and can properly apply APA-style. If not, it is your responsibility to re-familiarize yourself with this style guide. Never reference a web site or web source, ever. If you find a good article referred to on the web, get it, read it, and use that original source.

Unless otherwise noted, all written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, with 1" margins, and use a standard font (i.e., Arial, Times New Roman, or Helvetica) of size 12. Your name, the semester of the course, and the course name must appear in the upper right corner. Multiple pages must be sequentially numbered and stapled in the upper left corner.

Assignments will not be accepted and will be considered “late” until they are consistent with the above policy. All assignments must be handed in immediately when requested in class. Material handed in after this period will be considered late. Ten percent (10%) will be deducted from the final grade for each day that an assignment is late. Unless other arrangements have been made, I will not accept any assignment that is more than three days late.

This course fulfills the Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR).

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE
This is a seminar course that requires and benefits from everyone participating. In an effort to create a classroom environment conducive to sharing one’s thoughts, I require the following classroom etiquette:

• Be polite and respectful to the other people in the class.
• Do not carry on conversations with others during class.
Please turn off your cell phone. If you need to receive an emergency call, let me know about it in advance. Never take a call and start talking during class.

Do not work on any other course material during class, including studying for other exams.

Do not sleep during class.

These issues are not typically a problem; that said, doing any of these will not be tolerated and will be grounds for dismissal from the class.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The information in the syllabus is for your convenience. Any portion of it may change as seems appropriate, especially the dates on which topics and presentations occur. You are responsible for keeping current on any deviations from the class syllabus.

You are responsible for understanding the dates, policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, fee payment, withdrawal and so forth. These are listed under: http://info.sjsu.edu/home/schedules.html

SJSU complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act: If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with your instructor as soon as possible, or speak with your instructor during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is essential to the mission of San José State University. As such, students are expected to perform their own work (except when collaboration is expressly permitted by the course instructor) without the use of any outside resources. Students are not permitted to use old tests, quizzes when preparing for exams, nor may they consult with students who have already taken the exam. When practiced, academic integrity ensures that all students are fairly graded. Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy undermine the educational process and will not be tolerated. It also demonstrates a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students and the course instructor and can ruin the university's reputation and the value of the degrees it offers.

We all share the obligation to maintain an environment that practices academic integrity. Violators of the Academic Integrity Policy will be subject to failing this course and being reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action which could result in suspension or expulsion from San José State University.

Cheating

At SJSU, cheating is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. Cheating at SJSU includes but is not limited to:

- Copying in part or in whole, from another’s test or other evaluation instrument;
- Submitting work previously graded in another course unless this has been approved by the course instructor or by departmental policy.
- Submitting work simultaneously presented in two courses, unless this has been approved by both course instructors or by departmental policy.
- Altering or interfering with grading or grading instructions;
- Sitting for an examination by a surrogate, or as a surrogate;
- Any other act committed by a student in the course of his or her academic work that defrauds or misrepresents, including aiding or abetting in any of the actions defined above.

Plagiarism

At SJSU plagiarism is the act of representing the work of another as one’s own (without giving appropriate credit) regardless of how that work was obtained, and submitting it to fulfill academic requirements. Plagiarism at SJSU includes but is not limited to:

- The act of incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof, or the specific substances of another’s work, without giving appropriate credit, and representing the product as one’s own work;
- And, representing another’s artistic/scholarly works such as musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, painting, drawing, sculptures, or similar works as one’s own.

The following URL will take you to the SJSU library’s plagiarism tutorial. If you have not yet completed this, it is worth your while to do so. http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/plagiarism/index.htm

Your papers will be submitted via CANVAS/turnitin.com, which checks your paper against all papers in its database. This is meant as a teaching tool more than a punitive one.
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

When you reference something you have read, provide a complete, APA-style reference. Plagiarism, cheating on exams, or copying assignments is cause for failure of this course and may result in dismissal from the University. Students allowing others to copy their own work are guilty of cheating. Do not copy other students’ work.

If you do not reference what you are referring to, it will count as plagiarism. There are two ways you can most easily get in trouble with plagiarism: (1) not referencing a source that you used to get an idea; (2) using more than two words in a row of someone else’s writing without quoting them and providing a page number for the quote along with the reference. Again, use the APA style to do this.

If you plagiarize, you will fail the course and likely be dismissed from the university. This is a serious offense. The university takes it seriously, as do I. You should examine the Academic Honesty Guidelines for more details on the web at: [http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.htm](http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.htm)

### LECTURE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic of Discussion</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Exercises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Aug 26 | Why Am I in Graduate School?  
- The MA Program and Your Success Program of Study | Rossman  
Chapter 1 & 2  
Pp 3-6 Handbook  
| Sept 2 | The Nature of Writing Problems  
- Assessing any problems  
- Establishing writing momentum  
NO CLASS MONDAY SEPT 2 (Labor Day) | Rossman  
Chapters 1 & 2  
DeAngelis, 2008  
[http://abacus.bates.edu/~ganderso/biology/resources/writing/HTWgeneral.html](http://abacus.bates.edu/~ganderso/biology/resources/writing/HTWgeneral.html)  
pp. 49-68 Handbook | Thesis action plan & Statement of Purpose  
Writing Exercise |
| Sept 9 | Writing Scientifically  
- Sharing your Writing  
- Common Problems and Pitfalls | Baron 1991  
Whitesides 2004  
[http://www.psych.upenn.edu/~baron/labrep.html](http://www.psych.upenn.edu/~baron/labrep.html)  
APA writing exercise |
Oppenheimer (2006) | Readability Grades 6, 12, and 18 |

### Module 2: Developing Your Research Ideas: The Thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic of Discussion</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Exercises</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Sept 23| Formulating Your Ideas  
- Assessing Feasibility  
- Tools & strategies for searching the literature  
- Strategies for critically reviewing what you find | Rossman  
Ch5, pp. 79-84 | Developing a Focus & Hitting the Literature |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Sept 30  | · From Question to Hypothesis (Cont.)  
  · Sharing your ideas  
  · Writing your literature review |
|          | Rossman Ch 5, 84-95  
  Synthesizing Information |
| Oct 7    | · Design & Methods  
  · Understanding the fundamentals |
|          | Rossman Ch 5, 95-99  
  Your Purpose Statement & Design |
| Oct 14   | · Design & Methods  
  · Power Analysis |
|          | Rossman Ch 5, 99-102  
  SPSS Exercise Power analysis |
| Oct 21   | · IRB Proposal Basics  
  · Academic Integrity & Ethics |
|          | Multiple IRB articles  
  Thesis Guide  
  Online IRB Training |
| Oct 28   | · Selecting a Chairperson & Committee  
  · Faculty Presentations |
|          | Rossman Chapter 3  
  pp. 28-36 Handbook  
  Questions for Faculty |
| Nov 4    | Selecting a Chairperson & Committee  
  Faculty Presentations |
|          | Faculty visits |
| Nov 11   | Monday: VETERANS DAY NO CLASS |
|          | |
| Module 3: Developing Your Communication Skills |
| Nov 18   | (Faculty visits continued)  
  Defense (Oral Presentation)  
  How To Talk About Your Data  
  working individually on thesis presentation  
  Creating a winning talk in PowerPoint |
|          |  
  Rossman Ch 6  
  Faculty Visits  
  Your 1st Presentation |
| Nov 25   | Peer-review of slides; silent in class ratings  
  Jobs in Psychology  
  Job Application and Job Search |
|          |  
  Former MA graduates |
| Dec 2,9  | Oral Presentations |
|          | |
|          | FINAL WRITTEN THESIS PROSPECTUS DUE Dec 17, 5pm (Wed) |